

all. But most of all, may God bless the United States of America. Thank you very much. Thank you.

*Note: The President spoke at 12:38 p.m. at Mile Square Park. In his remarks, he referred to Senator John Seymour; Representatives Dana Rohrabacher, Robert K. Dornan, C. Christopher Cox, Norman Y. Mineta, David Dreier, and Nancy Pelosi; Delegate to Congress Eni F.H. Faleomavaega; Deputy Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao; Frank Kwan, a producer for television sta-*

*tion KNBC; Porntip Narkhirunkanok, 1989 Miss Universe; Elizabeth Szu, Inder Singh, and Ky Ngo, coordinators for the event; John Tsu, senior adviser for the event; Henry Tang, an education and sports leader in the community; Leo Esaki, 1973 Nobel Prize winner for physics; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; Patricia F. Saiki, Administrator of the Small Business Administration; Julia Chang Bloch, U.S. Ambassador to Nepal; and Sichan Siv, Deputy Assistant to the President for Public Liaison.*

## Remarks at the Simon Wiesenthal Center Dinner in Los Angeles, California

June 16, 1991

Thank you all very much. Let me first thank my dear friend, Jerry Weintraub, for that generous introduction. And thanks to Wilson Phillips for the anthem so beautifully done. My thanks to Tony Danza for being here. [Laughter] Had to go out and get a haircut so we would recognize him. [Laughter] But what a good man he is.

And Barbara and I are just delighted to be here tonight. We wanted to specially be here to salute our—yours and our—guest of honor. As you may know, Arnold—Arnold Schwarzenegger—spent a day with us up at Camp David, and competing with Barbara in tobogganing, she broke her leg. [Laughter] Then, Arnold spent a day with us at the White House promoting fitness, and I ended up in the hospital with arterial fibrillation, or something like that. [Laughter] You'll never eat lunch in my town again, Arnold. [Laughter] But I'm delighted to see you. Come to think of it, you could be my special emissary to Congress. [Laughter] Talk about "The Terminator."

Honestly, though, this guy is a wonderful choice, wonderful choice, for your National Leadership Award. He embodies the good, essential values of this world, values like caring and fairness and faith. He's simply a decent, nice human being. And congratulations, my friend. And thank you for honoring this wonderful American.

I also want to pay a special tribute to Gayle Wilson. Sorry Pete couldn't be with us tonight; he's up wrestling with the budget problems. And to Senator John Seymour, our wonderful new Senator in the United States Senate; to David Dreier, who's with us tonight—down here—a fine Member of the United States Congress. I'm told Mayor Bradley was to be here. I haven't seen him. But anyway, I wanted to salute him. We're in his city and delighted to be here. Is he there? Well, Tom, I can't see you, but nice to see you.

And all the friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center who are here tonight. The Counsel General of Israel is with us, Ron Ronen. And it's a particular pleasure to see our friend, the Bushes' friend, Rabbi Hier, again. Thank you, sir, for that honor, that beautiful cup. And let me just say that your vision, your conscience, and commitment set a challenge for us all. I will cherish this sacred gift of this Cup of Elijah. To you, "I lift up the cup of redemption in thanks and gratitude."

Let me say that I've heard that at Seder this Cup of Elijah is filled, as he just said, with wine and with the promise of redemption. I know the verse that says Elijah "shall turn the heart of the parents to the children, and the heart of the children to their parents." I really hope that this symbolic

gift can challenge us to do the same, to reclaim our soul through the love of the human family, a love borne of remembrance.

Let me just make a few comments, eating before the broccoli is served—[laughter]—and asking your forgiveness for pushing on. We have a big day tomorrow, off in Colorado and Wisconsin, before returning to Washington. So, please forgive us. But let me just say a word about this Center and for the man it's named for. The extraordinary hero that this center honors is our living embodiment of remembrance. The two pledges of Simon Wiesenthal's life inspire us all—"Never forget" and "Never again."

He reminds us that we as a people must study closely the lessons of the concentration camps. And, yes, like many here, Barbara and I have been to Auschwitz. We've seen the images of human evil. And literally, when I left, I left part of me. But I took something away in its place: the determination not just to remember but also to act.

I say this to you as a World War II veteran, as an American, and now as President of the United States: The haunting images compel us to guard against tyranny and inhumanity. Remembering makes us strong. Remembering makes us act.

But there's something else. We must also remember something more powerful than the horror: the triumph of the inextinguishable human spirit. Those who survived the Holocaust could have sunk into hate and revenge. Instead, they lifted themselves and all of humanity toward a greater goal. I believe that the ultimate lesson here is the transcendent glory of survival. Hope triumphed over horror. Life triumphed over death.

And we must also remember the story of a single life. In this case, the story of a great man named Raoul Wallenberg, a story brought to the conscience of the world by another great man, the one whose name this center bears. When I was over with Barbara in Budapest we went to Raoul's memorial to pay tribute. His actions embodied the highest ideals of human decency and morality, a hero of our times. We owe him not only tribute, not only remembrance, but also commitment, to have a full

and final accounting of his precious life.

We all know Elie Wiesel. He dedicates his life to the Holocaust and its victims because "anyone who does not remember betrays them again." The freedom we enjoy carries a profound responsibility. Now the victims of other human rights abuses call to us daily from across the globe. In the memory of the millions who died, we must not forget. We must not close our hearts. We must not fail to act.

We've been acting for years to promote freedom in the Soviet Union, including the freedoms of religion and emigration. That action has paid off. Jews in the Soviet Union can now study Hebrew. Jews who choose to leave can do so. Some delays, admittedly, but they can leave. Hundreds of thousands have made *aliyah* to Israel. This is freedom in action.

In the Gulf, Simon Wiesenthal was among the first to speak out against Saddam Hussein's brutality. He said: "Silence is admittance. We cannot tolerate silence." It was because of Saddam's aggression that we made our stand in the Persian Gulf. The world had ignored the brewing madness 50 years ago. We would not make the same mistake this time. It was a moral imperative to act.

As I contemplated as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces what action to take against Saddam Hussein's aggression, I thought of the world's inaction those many years ago when first the army and then the SS marched into Poland. It was on my mind as I had to make this fateful decision to send our sons and daughters into combat in the Gulf.

And then there's exciting and emotional freeing of the Ethiopian Jews that was referred to a minute ago. Rudy Boschwitz, a former United States Senator, a wonderful man, was our special emissary. Recently in the Rose Garden, I was privileged to honor him, Bob Frasure of the National Security Council, Irvin Hicks of the State Department, Robert Houdek there in our Embassy—embattled Embassy in Addis Ababa. For their extraordinary actions we honored them, helping in what turned out to be one of the most intensive humanitarian airlifts in history. Thanks in considerable part to

the efforts of the United States—a lot of people in the United States—the Ethiopian Jews were delivered from harm's way within 30 hours, reunited with loved ones, and given the opportunity to begin new lives in Israel. What a joyous, wonderful homecoming.

These events remind us that Israel was created as a refuge for Jews who face or flee persecution. So, our challenge is to make Israel truly secure. We learned the hard lesson that geography alone cannot guarantee security for Israel. We've learned that military power alone cannot guarantee her security. Israel and her neighbors will enjoy true and lasting security only when they achieve genuine reconciliation. And that's the goal behind the peace initiative that I launched 3 months ago.

Our Secretary of State has worked tirelessly to follow up, and direct negotiations between Israel and her neighbors no longer seem such a distant dream. The process we have designed can promote peace, but only if the parties in the region muster the political will to make it happen. If they do, the issues that divide them will fall away, and the Middle East at last can begin the journey toward lasting peace.

We're here tonight in honor of a place that drives us to use the pain of our past literally to forge a better future. The Simon Wiesenthal Center is not just a museum, although its vivid images will never let the past fade. It's also an activist organization of more than one million members, one million separate voices bound together in single purpose: the call for all lives to have meaning, dignity, and hope.

I must say that was running through my mind when the Holocaust survivors brought in the Mauthausen flag. What a story, those men and women creating out of scraps this symbol of the values that gave them hope. Just think, those values were the ones upon which this country was founded, ones we too often take for granted, I'm afraid, in our busy lives. I just wish that every American could hear their story. I wish every American could see this flag and feel the same emotion that I felt when these survivors brought it to this stage.

The values those courageous Jewish victims saw symbolized in our flag became

the ones on which they founded their new homeland. These shared values unite our country and Israel in an extraordinary, special kinship—values like freedom, democracy, morality, respect, deeply rooted traditions of tolerance, individual rights, and liberties. Our countries have forged an unprecedented bond, a bond of shared ideals, shared struggles, shared commitments.

Tonight, I want to return to those essential, basic values and pledge America's eternal vigilance for justice, peace, and human rights throughout the world. As your President, I say there is no room in America for indifference. The Holocaust must never be dehumanized or dismissed. We pledge it will also never be forgotten.

There is no room in this country for hate crimes. We must raise our voices and the full force of our law against every hate group, desecrator and demagog, brown shirt or white sheet. We will not be fooled by a change in disguise if corruption and inhumanity still lie buried in their hearts.

There is no room—no room at all—in America for bigotry. And we will stand firm against intolerance, racism, and discrimination in any form or any place: in our cities, in our media, in our minds, in our hearts. And we pledge to expose the corrosive hatred of bigotry wherever it festers and to rid our land of it for our children's sake.

There is no room in our America, in our world, for anti-Semitism. The insidious ugliness of this cancer destroys the human spirit. We must root it out and conquer it wherever it may start to grow.

There is no room in our world for persecution of a people. We must be committed to the security, opportunity, and identity for all peoples of the world.

There's no room in our world for persecution of a nation. Israel's survival will be guaranteed. And the best way to do that is through a just and lasting peace.

And above all, we must, each of us, embody in our lives the lesson of this wonderful center so brilliantly expressed by its hero, Simon Wiesenthal, who reminds us: "Freedom is not a gift from Heaven. One must fight for it every day." And that, my friends, is our final and most important pledge.

Thank you very much for the privilege of sharing this evening with you and for the warmth of your friendship, for the dedication of your purpose. And may God bless the United States, the greatest country on the face of the Earth. Thank you very much.

*Note: The President spoke at 7:20 p.m. in the Los Angeles Ballroom at the Century Plaza Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Jerry Weintraub and Rabbi Marvin Hier, board member and dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center; the singing group Wilson Phillips; actor Tony Danza, master of ceremonies for the dinner; Arnold Schwarzenegger, Chairman of the Presi-*

*dent's Counsel on Physical Fitness and Sports; Gayle Wilson, wife of Gov. Pete Wilson of California; Senator John Seymour; Representative David Dreier; Thomas Bradley, mayor of Los Angeles; Ron Ronen, Counsel General of Israel; humanitarians Simon Wiesenthal and Elie Wiesel; Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg; President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; former Senator Rudy Boschwitz; Robert C. Frasure, National Security Council Director for African Affairs; Irvin Hicks, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs; Robert G. Houdek, Charge d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia; and Secretary of State James A. Baker III.*

## Exchange With Reporters Aboard Air Force One

June 17, 1991

*The President.* We received a second letter from President Gorbachev, and it relates to the arms control situation, the START differences. We view it as a positive response. Obviously, when you're dealing with these details on START, when you're dealing with highly technical issues, it's hard to categorize letters of this nature. But the tone was good, the determination to reach agreement was positive. And we're looking very closely at the details, which I think would be most inappropriate to discuss here. We're down to some—as I mentioned the other day coming out here—some very fine points on arms control.

So, that's two letters in a very short period of time—the first, very positive tone on the grain credits. We're looking forward to a visit this week, I think it is, from Mr. Yeltsin when he comes here. And this last, the second letter on START, I view it as very important.

I know your next question will be, well, when will we have a summit meeting to initial something or sign something on START? I just don't know the answer to that. General Scowcroft can maybe follow up on it. But we don't have the answer. I'm still holding the dates at the end of June and the end of July, and I'm hoping

that we can move as quickly as possible to conclude it. But I have to say this is very positive.

### *Soviet-U.S. Relations*

*Q.* Did the letter discuss any kind of timetable on wrapping all this up?

*The President.* I don't think so. It didn't discuss—you mean on dates? No. But what it did is to respond to some of our suggestions on START and to build on some suggestions that they had previously made. But I'd say it's a narrowing of differences, and that's what we're—we're in agreement here where it's 96 percent, or, you know, close to it, concluded. I remember Moiseyev sitting in the Oval Office saying, "This much separates us," just this much. And so, I think maybe it's a little less today. But we've got to take a look at it.

*Q.* Is this a response to——

*The President.* I wouldn't say breakthrough, but I think it's progress.

*Q.* Is it a response to the ideas that were put forth in Lisbon?

*The President.* Yes.

*Q.* And do you think that Baker and Bessmertnykh are going to be able to kind of tie this up in Berlin?